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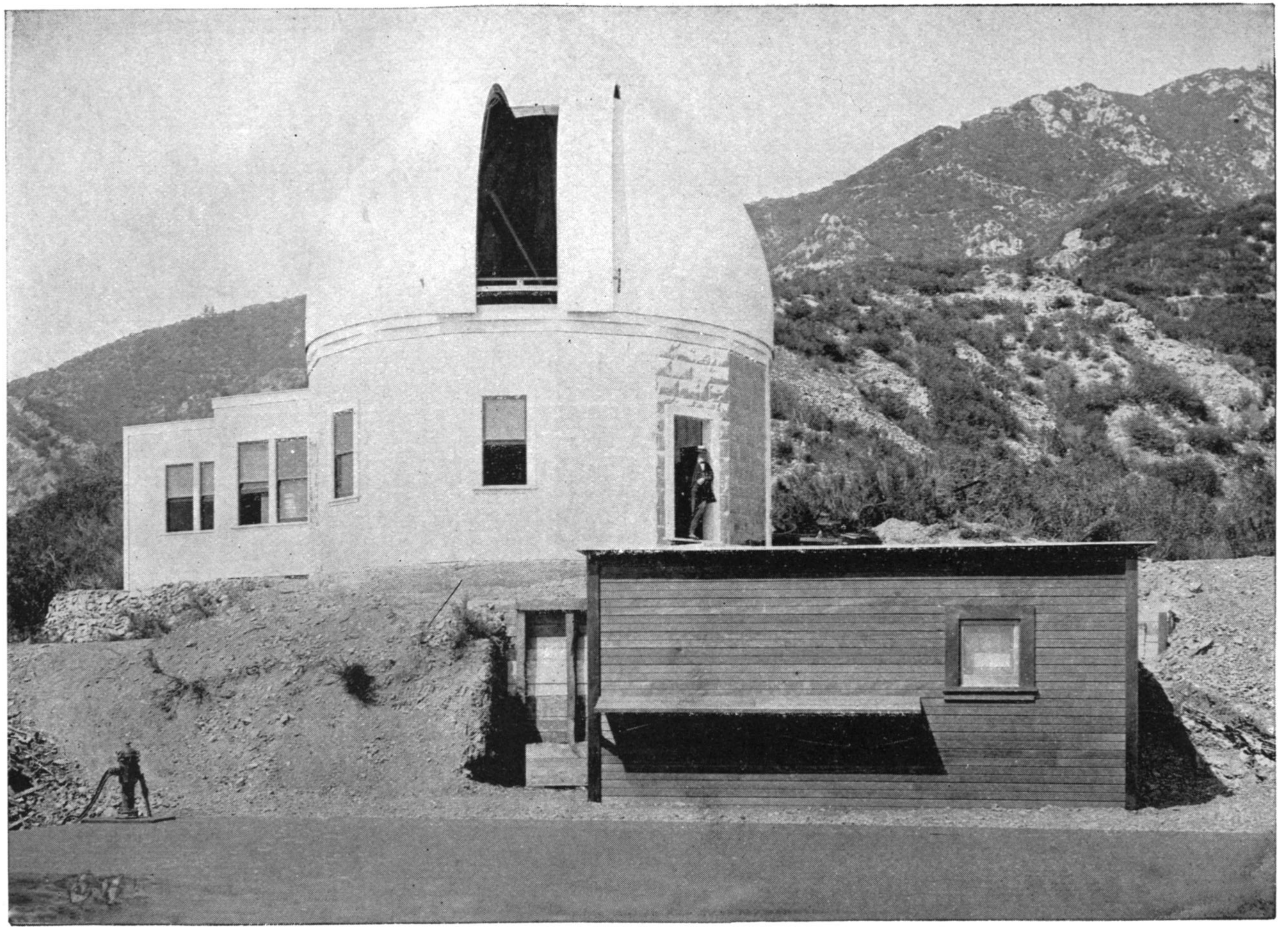


THE LOWE OBSERVATORY.

THE LOWE OBSERVATORY.

By C. D. Perrine.

The members of the Society will doubtless be interested to know something of this observatory, which has just been established in the Sierra Madre mountains, in the southern part of the State. The present location of the observatory is near Echo Mountain House, at the head of the cable incline of the Mount Lowe railway. Echo Mountain House is the present terminus of this mountain railway system, leading from Pasadena and eventually intending to reach the summit of the Sierra Madre at an altitude of about 6,000 feet. The Mount Lowe railway, with its system of hotels and pleasure resorts, is one of the enterprises inaugurated by Professor T. S. C. Lowe, a wealthy resident of Pasadena, who has gained distinction by his efforts in aëronautics, in the making of artificial ice, and in "water-gas" processes.

Altadena Junction, on the line of the Los Angeles Terminal Railway is the starting point of the mountain railway, which, as a trolley line for two and a half miles, ends at Rubio Cañon at an altitude of 2,200 feet; here the cable incline commences, and, in a climb of 3,000 feet on a heavy grade, attains the altitude of Echo Mountain—3,500 feet. Here and at Rubio Cañon are located hotels for the accommodation of the tourist.

From the present terminus an electric road is in process of construction to the summit of Mount Lowe, 2,500 feet higher and 7 miles distant. At present this part of the journey is made over a trail mule-back.

The observatory is at present situated on a slope of the mountain, about a quarter of a mile from Echo Mountain House, and consists of three rooms besides the dome. Near by is a photographic dark-room for use in connection with the observatory; the roof of this dark-room being utilized for the 4½-inch comet-seeker. The main instrument of the observatory at present is the 16-inch Clark refractor, belonging to Dr. Lewis Swift, and was brought by him from Rochester, New York.

Dr. Swift, who is in charge of the Lowe Observatory, was formerly of the Warner Observatory. His son Edward is his able assistant, and has already distinguished himself by his discovery of Comet *e*, on November 20. This discovery is of more than ordinary interest, as it may be that this comet is identical with DE VICO's lost comet of 1844. In a recent issue of the *Mount Lowe Echo* he announces the discovery of another comet in *Ursa Major*, on December 16, but before it could be identified the Moon arose and obliterated it; the next two nights were cloudy, and on the following night a search failed to find it.

Upon the completion of the railway to the summit, the observatory is to be permanently located there, and it is the intention to add several instruments to the equipment. The most important addition is to be a 3-foot reflector, which is to be used chiefly for photographic work.

Dr. SWIFT is much pleased with the great number of clear nights which the Sierra Madre afford. In a recent letter he says that, from April 20 to December 1, the cloudy nights have scarcely averaged three per month.

Visitors are permitted to look through the telescope every night, we understand. Besides a post and telegraph office, Echo Mountain has its newspaper—the *Mount Lowe Echo*, Professor G. WHARTON JAMES, editor—to whom we are indebted for the illustrations of the observatory which are here presented.

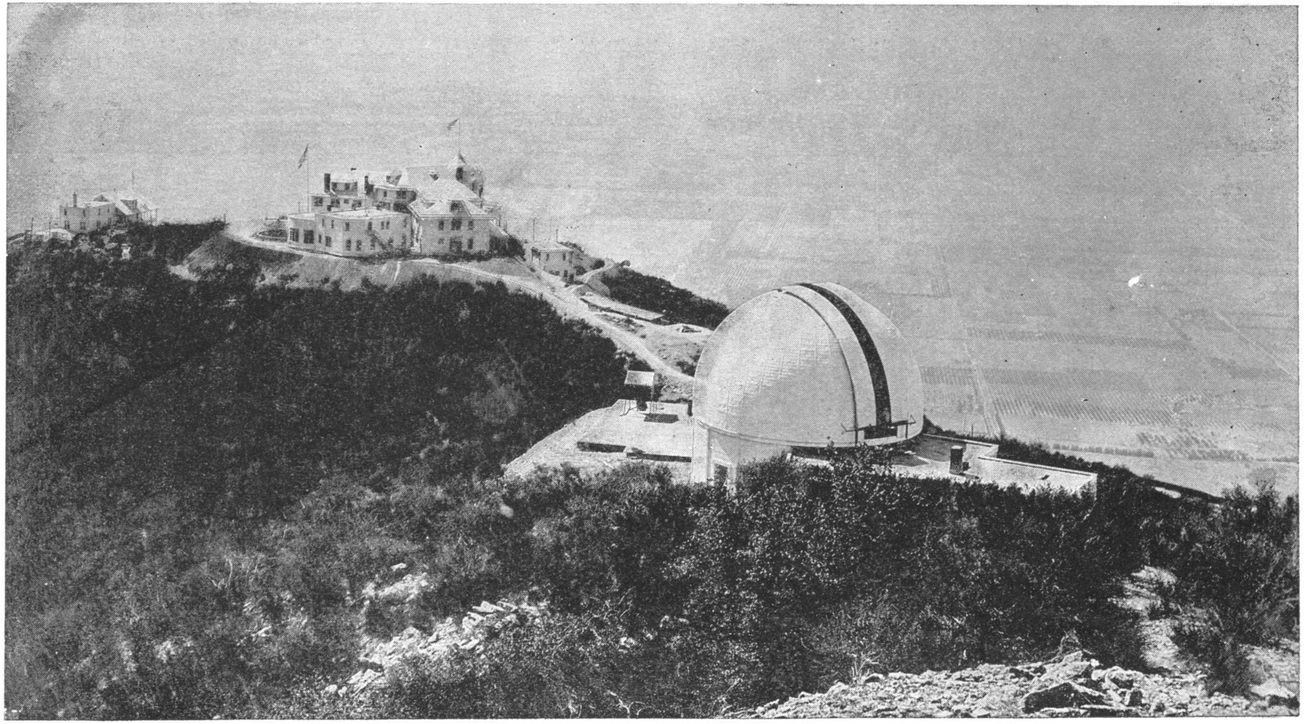
The large search light from the Midwinter Fair has been purchased and mounted at Echo Mountain.

THE PROGRESS OF METEOROLOGY IN THE UNITED STATES.

BY A. L. COLTON.

[ELEMENTARY METEOROLOGY. By W. M. DAVIS. Boston: GINN & Company. 1894.]

It is but very recently that meteorology, the youngest of the applied sciences, has gained any importance as a distinct subject to be taught in schools and colleges, although there is apparently no older topic than the weather. The long list of ridiculous "signs," upon which the weather-wise have based their predictions, still has a strong hold on the popular mind. A prime reason for the slow development of this science is the instability of the elements involved, and the corresponding difficulty of performing upon them definite experiments.



GENERAL VIEW OF ECHO MOUNTAIN, SHOWING ECHO MOUNTAIN HOUSE, CHALET, AND LOWE OBSERVATORY.
SAN GABRIEL VALLEY IN THE DISTANCE.